

Novelettes of New York Streets

The Great German Quarter Conspiracy

By Ethel Watts Mumford

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HERR BRAUN, mamma Braun, with Fritz, Hulda and Gretchen, descended one by one the dark, steep stairs to the apartment over the shop and emerged upon the shining, moist pavement of Third avenue in the Eighties. A moist, light snow was falling, ringing the electric globes with soft halos of iridescent light. Papa Braun paused a moment to run a careful eye over the inviting display in the window of his delicatessen store and to ascertain that business and not secretly reading Simplissimus or Fliegende Blätter. Satisfied on both points, he

noticed his muffer and herded his family before him. Fritz cast an envious eye at the illuminating entrance of a moving picture show. Fritz was the youngest and most Americanized of the children. Music, the family god, next to thrift, occupied a small niche in his mental pastures. He would have gladly preferred to see "Muttie Miller," a cowboy classic, than to hear the new songs announced to appear at the Froehner. But even Fritz knew better than to voice his preference. Herr Braun was a father of the old school and tolerated no insubordination. Mrs. Braun sighed heavily as she picked her way along the sidewalk. Her husband turned to her sharply.

"For why sigh you?" he demanded. "Is not good that we go to hear music and have beer and bratwurst at the hall? Ach! himmell! what would Fritz!"

Mamma Braun nodded her jet-black hair and said: "It is that the Froehner will give 'Oh, Tannenbaum' and 'Rosenlein auf der Heide' and 'Es regnet über Bursche'—all songs our Dorothchen used to sing. Oh, well! I would that she!"

Herr Braun's beard bristled. "Name her not to me!" he growled. "A girl who runs away when her good and sensible parents select for her a suitable, hard-working husband who saves his money, and breaks the heart of that good girl who will follow her girl who dared to—Ach! Sophie, do not speak to me!"

Fritz Braun sniffed. "Perhaps," he almost whispered, "perhaps we did not right to force her to this marriage. She was all for study, our Dorothchen—how knows?—and—At her mother's house, she was in bitterness. 'Hans, you just the same, no right had to tear up her letters without reading—and to send her from the door when she advertised in the paper. A huge face purpled with rage. 'Stop!' he roared. The whole family halted abruptly, paralyzed with fear. I speak to your mother," he added, annoyed at her mother's overreaction. The children cast frightened glances at each other and hurried on. 'I have not a right as a father—no? We will see. Let Fritz go to see her. Let Fritz go to see her or open a letter if she by me gets—no! She has been gone three years. Well, we had not of grief said, had we? No. Now I go to enjoy myself. I go to hear my music. I tell you, I will not have my evening spoiled with your 'Rosenlein' and 'Tannenbaum'! You black-eyed thing, Himmell! keep for yourself your nursery songs. Brudersliebe! tell me the new singer will get Brudersliebe's ride—' Mrs. Braun said, but continued to murmur, "Ach, Gott! he cares more for his music than his own flesh and blood—his beer and his Bratwurst. Oh, well!"

They turned from the avenue, walking east, where in huge letters of light the musical tavern advertised its entrance. They were surrounded by a good-natured, eager, Teutonic crowd of German conversation caught the ear, not unmixed with strong American dialect. What English was spoken was either broken or badly mixed. The music-loving population of the German quarter was all agog over the new singer.

The proprietor of the Froehner, had talked to his patrons with enthusiasm, but refused to divulge the name of his star—a star, the way that was far from being good; in fact, threatened to be meted out, as Brudersliebe explained. Her voice was so fine that perhaps the tobacco smoke in the hall might prove a danger to the wonderful "timbre."

The place was already filled when the Brauns entered, but the waiter had reserved for them the accounts table at a reasonable distance from the hall. The three numbers



ETHEL WATTS MUMFORD

tance from the excellent orchestra, that was at that moment rendering the closing bars of Grieg's "Peer Gynt Suite." The waiter, a friend of long standing, greeted his patrons enthusiastically, placed a finger to his nose in sign that he knew his clients' wants, and disappeared behind the clacking swinging doors to the service room.

The Brauns settled themselves, and glanced about, bowing to their friends and acquaintances, and joining in the cheerful conversation that greeted the close of the orchestral performance. Their entrance had occasioned an unusual stir. Openly or furtively every eye of the orchestra as he nodded or greeted, grinned excitedly, his black eyes snapping. Had it not been for the excellence of the rehearsal the fluent Mrs. Braun would have been in discord. At the back of the hall near the door heads were craned to catch a glimpse of the banal little party. Even the waiters, as they hot-footed it between the tables, paused to whisper confidentially to their patrons. To all of which black conspiracy of a whole neighborhood, Mrs. Braun and the little Brauns remained quite oblivious.

A quartet of young women in blue rendered the latest Viennese waltzes with rhythm and color. Slowly Mrs. Braun's head features were drooping, but even she could not resist the infection of the gay dance list. She rocked her ponderous body to and fro, and smiled. Hulda and Gretchen, too, were smiling. Fritz, too, was smiling. He had been so stoutly enabled to steal a portion of bratwurst from his sister's plates undetected. An exceedingly naughty thought came into his mind. He thought of the success of the day in Prague was regularly rendered by the soprano. Papa Braun laughed immoderately, patted Sophie on the back and ordered more beer. The waiter served were innocent, for once, of their usual collar. The second order of sausage was as generous as the first. The waiter was allowed no causes for complaint, not one.

The orchestra gave a selection from the "Freischütz," which received but scant attention. The hall was now crowded to its fullest capacity. The air was blue with smoke and heavy with excitement and suspense. The music of the big black-cased clock announced the close of the first act. Brudersliebe stepped up on to the platform. He was nervous and pale, and his head eyes continually glanced back to the face of Brudersliebe as if attached to it by invisible elastic.

The Fraulein who would now entertain the audience, day after day, rendered her first number—the familiar little song of the beloved Fatherland—behind the screen. She was in costume for her Brudersliebe selection, and she felt it was inappropriate to her first group of guests. It was a great occasion. The Froehner was honored by the presence of the great artist, and she would be revealed with her presentation of the Wagnerian heroine.

There was applause, quickly hushed as the accompaniment began the little tinkling air of "Rosenlein." From behind a tall green baize covered screen beside the platform that enfolded its length to the very door of the artists' dressing room came a high sweet voice, clear, pure and crystalline. It waivered just a trifle, then firm and true, held on its harmonious way, airy and unceasingly as a dream of sound.

Every eye was upon him, leaned back in his chair with beaming satisfaction. Mamma Braun, a sudden prey to emotional memories, sniffled and dug for her handkerchief.

As the little song ended there was a very curious of applause, which gave way to pin-drop silence as the propitiatory hand, and again the lovely notes of the unseen singer filled the hall. The three numbers

Miss Parlow Takes Ysaye's Place as Soloist

Canadian Violinist Wins New Laurels in Beethoven Concert—"Eroica" Symphony Also Played at Second Concert of Festival.

By Spilvester Rauling

WALTER DAMROSCH wisely restricted the second concert of the Beethoven festival by the Symphony Orchestra at Aeolian Hall last night to two imposing numbers, the third "Eroica" symphony and the concerto for violin. They furnished feast enough, without surfeit, for a large audience. The symphony was played with fine effect, the concerto with a fine effect, perhaps, too accidentally, but the scherzo with grace and daintiness, and the finale impressively.

Kathleen Parlow, the Canadian violinist, was soloist in the concerto. Eugene Ysaye, the distinguished Belgian, had been engaged for the part, but he insisted upon adding to the programme for himself a work not by Beethoven. Naturally Mr. Damrosch would not permit the innovation and he got Miss Parlow to take Mr. Ysaye's place. Miss Parlow played with a nobility and breadth that compelled admiration, and in spite of some difficulty in keeping her violin in tune, with lovely tone and fine technique. Already a favorite here, her reputation is greatly enhanced.

Although a programme slip read: "Ladies are kindly requested to remove their hats at these concerts," the women of the ground floors refused to heed the injunction. In these days, when man is being deprived by legal enactment of what for thousands of years has been his inalienable right to drink when and where he pleases, may not one hope for some legislation that will compel every woman to take off her hat in any place of public entertainment, day or night? If Mr. Damrosch had to sit through his afternoon concert and crane his neck to see the stage manager and his accompanying hats and plumes, he would wonder why any man ever attended them.

Puccini's "Mamm' Lucia" was repeated at the Metropolitan Opera House last night before a large audience, but with fewer standees than usually are present on a Caruso night. The performance, under Mr. Polacco's direction, was admirable. The cast was the familiar one, with Lucette Hori, Caruso, Scotti, de Segura, and Maria Duchene in the leading parts.

MARY GARDEN HAS THE GRIP; PUTNAM GRISWOLD NOT WELL.

Mary Garden has the grip. She telegraphed yesterday from the Ritz over, the appreciation of the throng broke out anew—a tempest of applause.

Braun was on his feet, clapping his huge hands with reports like pistol shots. He paused in the very act of bringing his palms together, as he beheld Wilhelm Toimer, the son-in-law of his selection and of Dorothchen's rejection, advancing toward him, his face waxen pale, his eyes starting from his head, his lips parted as if he would scream; and he elbowed about the music-loving crowd of men or mercy. He was gasping as he reached Herr Braun's side. But before he could speak the screen was pulled back and a radiant vision stepped forward. Golden hair rippled from beneath the winged helmet, blue eyes flashed from under level brows. The music of the corset moulded a strong, little body, and the wings of the robe disclosed a classic length of limb. In her vigorous young hand the spear of light seemed a fitting emblem of the beginning of a new straight, tall and commanding, a daughter of the gods. But the blue eyes were wet with tears, and they glistened in the light of the face of Herr Braun, the delicate purveyor of Third Avenue. Herr Braun gasped and crumpled. He felt himself as if he were in a conspiracy, which was indeed the fact. He realized that he, and not Dorothchen on the stage, was the object of all attention. He glanced at Sophie. She was, too, in this disgraceful, underhand manoeuvring to publicly force the issue. The music of the corset moulded a strong, little body, and the wings of the robe disclosed a classic length of limb. In her vigorous young hand the spear of light seemed a fitting emblem of the beginning of a new straight, tall and commanding, a daughter of the gods. But the blue eyes were wet with tears, and they glistened in the light of the face of Herr Braun, the delicate purveyor of Third Avenue. Herr Braun gasped and crumpled. He felt himself as if he were in a conspiracy, which was indeed the fact. 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